

# Department of Human Services

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Published October 27, 2006

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## Lisa Holland found guilty in son's death

Midday update

Lansing State Journal

Lisa Holland was found guilty this morning of murder in the July 2005 death of her 7-year-old adopted son Ricky.

An Ingham County jury deliberated since Wednesday afternoon before finding Holland guilty of both first degree murder and child abuse. Her sentencing was set for Nov. 28; Holland faces mandatory life in prison on the charges.

Ricky was reported missing from his family's Williamston home on July 2, 2005, but testimony in the six-week trial revealed he died the previous evening. His remains were found in a marshlike area near Dansville in January.

Lisa's husband, Tim Holland, already has pleaded guilty to second-degree murder in the case and testified in her trial. He asked her to accept her role in Ricky's death.

Check out [www.lsj.com](http://www.lsj.com) for additional updates on the verdict.

Do you have a comment on the verdict? Click on "Story chat" below or send your thoughts to [metro@lsj.com](mailto:metro@lsj.com).

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# ClickOnDetroit.com

## Verdict Reached In Ricky Holland Abuse-Murder Trial

POSTED: 10:30 am EDT October 27, 2006

A jury Friday reached a verdict in the child-abuse and first-degree murder trial of Lisa Holland in Lansing.

Holland was found guilty of first-degree murder and first-degree child abuse in the death of her 7-year-old adopted son Ricky.

The prosecution and defense wrapped up their closing arguments Wednesday.

The jury deliberated for almost eight hours on Thursday before going home, then went back to work Friday morning.

Tim Holland led police to his son's body in January and later pleaded guilty to second-degree murder.

He accepted a plea deal and testified against his wife.

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## Jurors weigh case against Ricky's mom

**BY JACK KRESNAK**  
FREE PRESS STAFF WRITER

*October 27, 2006*

LANSING -- The jury in the Lisa Holland murder trial completed its first full day of deliberations Thursday without reaching a verdict.

Ingham County Circuit Judge Paula Manderfield sent jurors home about 4:30 p.m.

The 12-person jury is deciding whether Holland, 33, abused and killed her 7-year-old son, Ricky Holland, in 2005.

Lisa Holland is charged with open murder and child abuse. Under an open-murder charge, the jury can convict a defendant of first-degree felony murder, second-degree murder, involuntary manslaughter or murder-accessory after the fact. In Holland's case, the jury also will decide whether she is guilty or not of first- or second-degree child abuse.

Her husband, Tim Holland, 37, has pleaded guilty to second-degree murder in Ricky's death and testified against his wife during her trial, which began with jury selection on Sept. 11.

Tim Holland has not yet been sentenced.

In October 2000, when Ricky was 3 1/2, the Jackson County Department of Human Services placed him in the Hollands' state-licensed foster home in Jackson. The couple adopted Ricky and one of his three siblings three years later. Then they adopted the other two siblings.

The jury will continue deliberating today.

Manderfield has allowed the lone alternate juror, a young mother with children, to wait at home instead of at the courthouse in case she is needed to replace one of the 12 jurors. Manderfield cautioned that juror not to read or watch news reports about the case, or go back to work, until a verdict is reached.

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Ricky Holland was 7 when he died in 2005. His adoptive mother is charged with child abuse and murder.

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Published October 27, 2006

## Jurors end full day of deliberations with no verdict in Holland's trial

By Kevin Grasha  
Lansing State Journal

Jurors end full day of deliberations with no verdict in Holland's trial

Jurors in Lisa Holland's murder trial ended deliberations late Thursday afternoon without reaching a verdict.

The eight men and four women began deliberating Wednesday after lunch following closing arguments. They will resume deliberations this morning.

The Williamston woman is charged with murder and child abuse in the July 2005 death of her 7-year-old adopted son, Ricky. Her husband, Tim Holland, has pleaded guilty to second-degree murder and testified against his wife.

Late Wednesday afternoon, jurors sent a note to Ingham County Circuit Judge Paula Manderfield with two questions.

One question asked for clarification about the child abuse charge. The second was not read aloud in court, but Manderfield told them to follow the jury instructions and look at the evidence.



(Photo by LSJ file photo)

Awaiting verdict: Lisa Holland is accused of killing her 7-year-old adopted son Ricky.

### Online xtra

- Check for coverage of a verdict throughout the day and share your thoughts on the Holland case at [www.lsj.com](http://www.lsj.com).

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## **Jurors continue deliberating in Holland murder trial**

LANSING, Mich. -- The jury in the murder trial of Lisa Holland, who is accused of abusing and killing her 7-year-old adopted son, deliberated for about eight hours Thursday without reaching a verdict. The 12 jurors, who began deliberating Wednesday afternoon, were scheduled to resume deliberations at 8:30 a.m. Friday.

Holland, 33, of Williamston, is charged with first-degree child abuse and felony murder in Ricky Holland's 2005 death. Tim Holland, 37, led police to the body and pleaded guilty to second-degree murder as part of an agreement to testify against his wife. He has not yet been sentenced.

To convict Lisa Holland of felony murder, prosecutors tried to prove the death occurred while she committed first-degree child abuse.

Ricky vanished from his Williamston home east of Lansing in July 2005. His adoptive parents said he ran away, sparking a nine-day search by 1,700 volunteers and hundreds of law enforcement officers.

Jury selection in the trial began Sept. 11.

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## Holland Case Has Impact Beyond Courtroom

Tony Tagliavia



[Holland Case Impacts Policy](#)

It's a case whose impact has spread well beyond the courtroom.

"Believe me, there will be an investigation of what happened. If there needs to be corrections, those will be made," Gov. Jennifer Granholm told reporters February 16.

Those "corrections" would be made at the Department of Human Services. Court documents and testimony in the Ricky Holland murder ☐ case claim the department saw multiple reports of abuse by Ricky's parents before he died.

The DHS investigation into the case cannot be discussed while elements of the Holland case are pending.

But since the February announcement, the governor and the legislature have given the department additional caseworkers to combat staff shortages.

DHS director Marianne Udow discussed the ramifications of the Holland trial in a phone interview Thursday.

"This case affirms the course that we are taking," Udow said. "(We are) increasing the current background checks on foster parents and caregivers," she said. Other pending changes include more information sharing to prevent losing track of children who move from county to county, more training and more community involvement.

Udow says the changes have been underway for three years.

The Michigan Office of Children's Ombudsman has conducted its own investigation into the Holland case, although, like DHS, the office can't speak about the investigation while the case is ongoing.

Even the state legislature has weighed in, with its House Special Committee on Child Protection calling for the Children's Ombudsman office to be shifted from the executive branch to legislative control.

That's a move the governor has opposed.

More changes and more information could come once all the components of the Holland trial are complete.

Until then, Udow says her agency is hoping for justice in the case.

"We, with everyone else, are waiting to see what the jury does."

### Find this article at:

<http://www.wilx.com/news/headlines/4489956.html>

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## Rose's parents agree to deal

Couple give up kids, face criminal charge

### FLINT

#### THE FLINT JOURNAL FIRST EDITION

Friday, October 27, 2006

By Paul Janczewski

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In some small way, 5-year-old Rose Kelley's death may have saved the lives of her three siblings, a prosecutor said.

"What happened to her may count for something," said assistant Genesee County Prosecutor Marcie M. Mabry.

Mabry's words came at the end of a hectic day in court Thursday in which Rose's parents, Michelle L. Bowen and her fiancée, Jeffrey C. Kelley Sr., lost parental rights to their two surviving children and another child Bowen had with another man.

The couple also agreed to plead no contest to charges of involuntary manslaughter, a 15-year felony, in Rose's June 3 death from liver failure compounded by neglect in her Franklin Avenue home.

They are scheduled to appear in Flint District Court today for arraignment on the criminal charge and waive the preliminary examination.

Then, they will appear before Genesee Probate Judge Robert E. Weiss again for sentencing.

Rose, 5, died at the family's home, 1606 N. Franklin Ave., after she was sick for five days. She had not been taken to a doctor.

Kelley and Bowen have two other children, a boy, 6, and a girl, 2, and Bowen has a 10-year-old daughter with Jeffrey Mitchell, who has appeared for only one court hearing.

Since Rose's death, the three children have been placed in a foster home in Michigan but outside of Genesee County, Mabry said.

"Those children are doing fabulous," she said. "They are growing and progressing and appear to be happy, developing skills they didn't have before."

She said she saw them recently, and was prepared to call the oldest girl to testify at trial, if necessary, about the squalid conditions in the home where Rose died.

"They are getting the help they need now, and they are safe and secure," she said.

Before trial, Mabry shuffled through a wicker basket containing the court documents she would need during the trial and was prepared to show to a jury.

One picture showed a smiling and happy Rose.

The others showed a dead child covered with lice, her body so wracked with malnutrition she resembled a concentration camp victim.

Police also said in a warrant Thursday that medical experts believe Rose would have survived if she had been given medical attention.

The two-part trial before Weiss began Wednesday when Mabry and the three attorneys representing Bowen, Kelley and Mitchell tried to pick a jury but ran out of potential candidates.

Mabry and the attorneys said many jurors had strong feelings against parental neglect; others knew too much about the case and could not be fair and impartial.

On Thursday, before a new panel of potential jurors was called, Kelley agreed to give up rights to his two children and to plead no contest to involuntary manslaughter.

Weiss also took control over the 10-year-old girl, ruling that Mitchell was an unfit parent. Witnesses said he never paid the \$39 per week to Bowen in child support, owed more than \$39,000 in arrearages and seldom visited his daughter.

Bowen initially would not agree to a plea deal that had her plead guilty to the same charge as her fiance and relinquish her parental rights.

Flint police then obtained a warrant Thursday afternoon, charging Bowen with second-degree murder, which carries a life prison term.

Bowen then agreed to give up her parental rights and plead guilty to the involuntary manslaughter charge.

Attorney Kraig Sippell, who represents Bowen, said she reluctantly agreed when she realized "she didn't have a chance" and that she could face significant prison time.

"She didn't want to do it," he said.

Attorney John Tosto, who represented Kelley, said his client took the plea deal because he did not want to put the children through the trauma of testifying at trial.

The Oakland County medical examiner ruled Rose Kelley's death a homicide and said she died from liver failure compounded by neglect.

Police have said Bowen told them she knew her daughter was sick for days but never took her to a doctor, fearing her children would be taken from her because of lice infestation.

Michigan Department of Human Services spokeswoman Maureen Sorbet would not comment on the charges against Bowen and Kelley, saying Prosecutor David Leyton asked the department to refrain from comment while the case is open.

DHS caseworkers have been under scrutiny for their actions in the case because the department had been in contact with the Kelley-Bowen family before Rose Kelley's death.

The agency had ordered Rose's parents to take parenting classes in 2004 and receive "prevention services" in 2005 after allegations that another child in the home had been medically neglected, according to a court petition.

Leyton told a House Special Committee on Child Protection in August that the safety net set up to protect children showed itself "inadequate" in this case.

That same month the state Office of Children's Ombudsman cleared DHS of any wrongdoing in the death.

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Journal staff writers Kim Crawford and Ron Fonger contributed to this report.

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## Mother Charged With 2nd Degree Murder In Daughter's Death

Oct 26, 2006 05:38 PM EDT

(TV5) -- According to the *Flint Journal*, Rose Kelley's mother Michelle Bowen has been charged with second-degree murder in the death of her daughter.

Relatives cried in court October 26<sup>th</sup>, while Michelle Bowen rocked back in forth in court as the judge read a report about the filthy conditions of her home where her five year-old daughter Rose Kelley died in deplorable conditions.

"A picture was taken of the toilet containing a mass of hair and head lice," the judge added, "the lice was noted on the child's face. Layer upon layer of head lice and eggs were noted on the remains."

Bowen refused a plea deal to give up her kids. "She was basically bobbing and pretty upset. She couldn't speak. I think she's in shock," said her attorney

The father of Rose, Jeffrey Kelley, gave up parental rights two his other two kids and will plead to involuntary manslaughter charges in Rose's death.

Kelley's attorney says he did it to save any kids from testifying. "He made the decision on his own." "He thinks it's the right thing and in the best interest of all the kids."

There is a third parent. Jeffrey Mitchell the father of Bowen's oldest child. We haven't seen him, only his attorney.

The only person to paint his picture is Kelley; describing Mitchell as a father who doesn't see his daughter for months, even years at a time, and doesn't provide financial support. "There's times he'll just walk in, say hi to the kids and then they don't see him for a few months," said Jeffrey Kelley.

Three parents make the legalities of this case goofy and at times confusing. The only clear part is three children are living in foster care because their lice infested house was deemed unsafe and unlivable.

After two days in court, we may still not have the full picture. But we have a clearer view into the life of Rose Kelley and her three remaining siblings.



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Article published Oct 26, 2006

## **BREAKING NEWS**

### **Nowak gets 20 to 40 years for murder**

Convicted child murderer Keith Nowak was sentenced this afternoon to serve the next 20 to 40 years in prison.

Calling Mr. Nowak's crime the ultimate child abuse, Monroe County Circuit Judge Joseph A. Costello Jr. sentenced the Dundee resident for his role in the Nov. 26 death of Mr. Nowak's son, Andrew Nowak, who was two-months old.

Medical and police officials said Mr. Nowak squeezed his son to death. However, Mr. Nowak, 30, told The Evening News in a recent interview that he accidentally fell on the infant.

The defendant pleaded no contest to second degree murder, which the court treats as a guilty plea.

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By SARA ROBINSON

## Vigil remembers the victims of domestic violence



**CAPTION:** News Photo by Amy Lisenbe

**Brynda Burris-Volkenborn, featured speaker at the Shelter, Inc. Candlelight Vigil gestures as she tells her story to the group Thursday evening at the Alpena-Montmorency-Alcona Educational Service District.**

Trees at a candlelight vigil commemorating victims of domestic violence Thursday bore the names of both fatalities and survivors.

It was a reminder that the purpose of the vigil was not only to mourn the loss of those who died, but to celebrate victims who had survived.

The vigil, which was sponsored by Shelter, Inc. of Northeast Michigan, began with a short video presentation on domestic violence. During the video, the audience listened to a six-year-old child tell a 911 dispatcher that her mother had been killed.

"The film that we just watched was very, very difficult for me, because the hurt that I have now is the hurt I had 50 years ago, 40 years ago, 30 years ago, 20 years ago," said Brynda Burris-Volkenborn, a domestic violence survivor.

The film was followed by a panel discussion by Alpena County Chief Assistant Prosecutor Judi Twarozynski, Alpena Regional Medical Center nurse Kelly Girard and Capt. Jason Schaal of the Salvation Army.

Twarozynski said prosecuting domestic violence cases is often difficult because many times the victim will decide not to prosecute or will recant an earlier statement. Some recent changes in the law, however, including a law that now allows hearsay from law enforcement officers to be admitted as evidence, has made prosecution of domestic violence cases somewhat easier, she said.

Twarozynski stressed the importance of better education to increase awareness of the problem and to encourage people to take it more seriously. She pointed out that domestic violence is a 93-day misdemeanor, while driving without car insurance is a one-year misdemeanor.

"I think our legislature needs to start addressing these issues," she said.

Girard, an emergency room nurse, said while she personally hadn't dealt with a domestic violence situation at the hospital, emergency room staff was trained to ask those who were injured if they felt safe at home. If people say they have been abused, health care workers are required to report the incident to the police, she said. Girard said one factor that may make domestic violence situations hard for hospital personnel to identify, is people often don't want to talk about abuses. Those who are injured often are accompanied to the emergency room by their spouses, she added.

Schaal said at his last appointment, he had worked with a victim who dropped the charges against her abuser just before the case was to go to court.

"I really think (domestic violence) comes from a lack of self worth on both sides," he said.

In addition to hearing from panelists, the audience heard testimony from Burris-Volkenborn, who described the family strife she experienced as a young child and the trauma she suffered with two abusive husbands.

She said her first husband, who was in the military, returned from the conflict in Vietnam a different man. Abuse was such a constant in her life that she stopped counting the times her husband hit her.

"It happened time and time again," she said. "I can't remember the number. I just remember how I would hit the floor."

Burris-Volkenborn said about seven years ago she finally began gaining self-esteem. She now has a healthy marriage, and is on the board of directors at a shelter in Grayling.

She said it is important that more survivors of domestic violence speak out.

"There has to be more people like me who are no longer ashamed, who are no longer embarrassed, who are no longer afraid," she said.

Sara Robinson can be reached via e-mail at [srobinson@thealpenanews.com](mailto:srobinson@thealpenanews.com) or by phone at 354-3111 ext. 316.

Battle Creek Enquirer

October 27, 2006

[Campaign Notebook](#)

## **Renier says Walberg had judgment lapse**

Democrat Sharon Renier on Thursday criticized Republican Tim Walberg for not firing a staff member who pleaded guilty to domestic assault following an Aug. 27 fight with his 9-year-old foster son.

The staffer, Daniel Coons, resigned on Wednesday after the issue became public.

Calling the former preacher "morally bankrupt," Renier drew a parallel between Walberg's conduct and that of the Republican leadership in Congress and its handling of the a sex scandal involving teenage congressional pages.

"Walberg's lapse of judgment is no better behavior, and should disqualify him from running for any office, let alone Congress," Renier said.

Walberg's campaign declined to respond.

"We've said everything we're going to say," campaign manager Joe Wicks said.

Walberg has said the state Foster Care Review Board recommended the child be returned to Coons. The misdemeanor domestic violence charges — pleaded down from felony child abuse — stemmed from a struggle between the 9-year-old boy, Coons and his wife, Sarah Coons.

Walberg faces Renier in the 7th Congressional District race along with Libertarian Robert Hutchinson and U.S. Taxpayer David Horn.

*Campaign Notebook was compiled by Enquirer reporter Andy Rathbun.*

**DeVos: Aide's resignation 'proper'**

Friday, October 27, 2006

**By Susan J. Demas**

**sdemas@citpat.com -- 768-4927**

Republican gubernatorial candidate Dick DeVos said Thursday that a paid official's resignation from Tim Walberg's campaign for the U.S. House 7th District was "the proper outcome."

Walberg's volunteer coordinator, Daniel Coons, quit Wednesday.

The resignation came in the wake of a Citizen Patriot report Wednesday that Coons, 30, of Eaton Rapids pleaded guilty last month to domestic violence. Coons said he struck his 9-year-old foster child in the face, according to a police report.

DeVos and Walberg appeared together Thursday at a Blissfield factory.

"The individuals working with you are a reflection of who you are," DeVos said en route to Jackson, where he appeared at a political event. "Therefore, as a leader, you have a responsibility to make sure individuals on staff reflect our values, our views."

DeVos and Walberg, an evangelical minister and former Moody Bible Institute fundraiser, both campaign on family values.

Walberg said Thursday at the Greater Jackson Chamber of Commerce's Party Politics mixer that he hadn't spoken to Coons since Wednesday. He restated his opinion that Coons' foster children should be returned to him.

"We're still working," said Walberg, who is facing Sharon Renier, D-Munith, on Nov. 7. "It's just a normal day on the campaign trail."

Walberg paid Coons \$11,285 since April, according to finance records.

Renier, who was also at the chamber event at Bella Notte Ristorante, said Walberg hasn't shown a commitment to children, voting as a state legislator against a \$5,000 child care tax credit and strengthening child support laws.

"I don't know if Tim believes spare the rod, spoil the child," Renier said.

"But to not fire (Coons) shows he has no spine, no backbone at all."

Walberg said he knew of the alleged abuse "on or about Sept. 12."

He said Coons never told him of the guilty plea.

"I learned that Tuesday from (the Citizen Patriot)," Walberg said.



# THE BAY CITY TIMES

## Jury acquits Kinde man of assault charges

Sentence for alleged attack on bar and party store owner could have been life in prison

Friday, October 27, 2006

By **TOM GILCHRIST**

**TIMES WRITER**

**BAD AXE** - A Huron County jury deliberated for more than eight hours on Thursday before acquitting a 37-year-old Kinde man accused of a vicious attack on his girlfriend in June.

Scott G. Rice had faced up to life in prison had jurors convicted him of assault with intent to commit murder.

But the jury found him not guilty of that crime and not guilty of two counts of criminal sexual conduct.

"I told the jury there's a difference between believability and the truth," said Steven A. Freeman, the Lansing attorney representing Rice.

"It doesn't matter whether you believe (the alleged victim) or not, because it doesn't lead you to the truth," Freeman said. "The facts lead you to the truth."

In the weeks before the trial, Rice's attorneys had wondered whether Huron County Prosecutor Mark J. Gaertner's friendship with the alleged victim - the 45-year-old operator of a bar and party store in Huron County - led to unusually stiff charges against Rice.

One of Rice's lawyers wondered why Gaertner didn't charge Rice with domestic violence, which carries a maximum sentence of only 93 days in jail.

But Gaertner said there's no close friendship with the woman, saying he knows both victims and defendants in a rural area such as Huron County.

The prosecutor said Rice beat the woman severely. Michigan State Police said the woman alleged Rice slammed her head against a wall and door repeatedly, even though Rice knew she had a metal plate in her head due to previous surgery.

Freeman, however, said the defense "called three medical doctors to the stand, and they all testified that she had no injuries in connection with her claim of having been brutally attacked."

One doctor examined the woman hours after the alleged attack on June 10 at Rice's home near Kinde, while another examined her several days later, Freeman said.

"The third doctor, a radiologist, read a CAT scan and X-rays of her head, and he didn't see any damage inside," Freeman said.

The woman alleged Rice placed her in the trunk of a car and planned to take the car out and burn it, with her inside it, police said. The woman said she and Rice had been arguing about her plan for a break-up.

The woman told police she escaped the car trunk and tried to flag down a passerby for help, only to have Rice grab her and throw her back in the trunk.

She eventually fought her way out of the trunk and called her sister for help, police said.

But Scott Rice's mother, 62-year-old Lorraine Rice of Port Austin, said her son simply tried to help the

woman through some problems, only to end up in court on criminal charges.

"She's a drama person," Lorraine Rice said after Thursday's trial. "She just keeps adding to her story - she's one of them kind."

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## Violence victims get long-term housing

Friday, October 27, 2006

**JILL ARMENTROUT**

**THE SAGINAW NEWS**

A new state grant will allow Saginaw's Underground Railroad Inc. to offer long-term housing for survivors of domestic violence.

Domestic violence is a leading cause of homelessness, said Valerie Hoffman, president and chief executive officer of the Underground Railroad, which provides shelter and advocacy for survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking.

In addition to its emergency shelter, the agency has 22 units of transitional housing available to survivors for up to two years.

"Many in transitional housing get back on track after two years, but that's not realistic for some families," she said. "This could end a cycle of homelessness for them. They could stay for 20 years if they met the requirements."

The Michigan State Housing Development Authority awarded the nonprofit agency a \$600,000 grant to buy and improve six units of affordable rental housing for these low-income families.

Neighborhood Renewal Services of Saginaw is providing construction management services and contributing funds of more than \$242,000.

The groups were to introduce the project today with an open house at one of the properties, 824 N. Harrison in Saginaw.

To qualify, families can earn up to 30 percent of the median family income in Saginaw County, up to \$15,050 for a family of three. Survivors in the families also must have a diagnosable mental or physical disability, Hoffman said.

"Disability income (from Social Security) is very limited," she said. "Some survivors have closed-head injuries or spinal injuries as a result of the domestic violence."

The homes are in the city of Saginaw and include a one-bedroom, three two-bedroom and two three-bedroom houses. Rent would not exceed 30 percent of a family's income.

Renovation has started, including lead paint abatement and addition of handicap-accessible provisions. Crews will add fencing, yard work and playgrounds, Hoffman said.

"We are improving them for easy management as rentals," said Mark Neumeier, executive director of Neighborhood Renewal. He expects crews to complete work in three to six months.

Several families already are waiting for the housing, Hoffman said.

The state's Domestic Violence Housing Initiative is among the first of its kind in the nation. Saginaw's grant was one of the largest provided, Neumeier said.

National City Bank is providing a \$200,000 bridge loan at zero percent interest to the Underground Railroad to help with cash flow.

Hoffman said the emergency shelter on South Washington also is in need of growth to handle continuing full occupancy. Possibilities include adding on or operating a second building, she said. Fundraising efforts could start next year.

The agency had to eliminate three full-time staff positions this month because of \$85,000 in funding reductions. United Way contributions are down for the fiscal year, and change in a state grant means that money can't go to salaries, Hoffman said.

Administrators cut Gloria Woods' program director position, along with a receptionist and community outreach prevention educator, she said. v

Jill Armentrout is a health writer and Neighbors coordinator at The Saginaw News. You may reach her at 776-9681.

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Published October 27, 2006

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## **Health \$\$: Realization grows that ignoring health costs is too costly**

A Lansing State Journal editorial

In Michigan, retailer Meijer announces it will provide free prescriptions for seven common antibiotics.

In Texas, a hospital is giving free preventive care to people with chronic diseases with no insurance.

Bad business? Or evidence of a broadening realization in our culture that bad health-care policy costs everybody.

Meijer's decision to go with some free drugs can be seen simply in the context of competing with rivals Wal-Mart and Kmart, which have adopted their own cheaper drug enticements to consumers. All three firms must figure that if you can draw folks in with drug prices, they'll stop and buy something else along the way.

But these retailers' decisions also make it more likely that struggling Americans will obtain needed drugs, which, in turn, should make them healthier.

That, in turn, should make them less likely to walk into hospital emergency rooms with serious medical problems, which brings us to Texas.

As reported in the New York Times, the Seton Family of Hospitals in Austin struggled to cover the costs of chronically sick patients who had no health insurance. The article featured one case of a woman who had \$191,000 in unpaid bills because of diabetes.

Rather than continue to hound the woman for money she did not have, the hospital group enrolled her in a free preventive care program to help her manage her condition - and keep her out of the emergency room.

Emergency room care is inherently costly - to hospital and patient alike. By helping the diabetic woman with free care up-front, the hospital expects to save lots of money on the back end.

And that, in turn, will save everybody, since those who pay taxes or have health insurance are paying for everyone who does not.

And the number of medical have-nots is growing. The ranks of the uninsured is somewhere around 45 million, and more and more businesses that once offered health insurance to employees are looking for ways out.

Michigan gubernatorial candidate Dick DeVos has argued the traditional response: The best health-care plan is to get a job. That ignores the trend lines and the problem of paying for uninsured care

that must be given in emergency rooms.

These are the trends driving governors ranging from conservative Republican Mitt Romney of Massachusetts to Michigan Democrat Jennifer Granholm to programs to get more people on some type, any type, of insurance.

Not all health-care dollars are alike; \$1 spent in preventive care can save a fortune later. More people are realizing that fact, to everyone's future benefit.

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Published October 27, 2006

## Wal-Mart fills prescriptions for \$4 in Mich.

Experts advise patients to stick with 1 pharmacy

By Christine Rook  
Lansing State Journal

LANSGING TWP. - John Longstreth was skeptical.

Was it true his \$17 prescription of glipizide for diabetes would now cost just \$4? Yep.

Wal-Mart Stores Inc. on Thursday morning began selling 30-day supplies of 143 generic prescription drugs for just \$4.

The price is good at all 104 Wal-Mart and Sam's Club pharmacies in Michigan.

"I'll save a whole chunk," Longstreth said after confirming the price at the Wal-Mart near Eastwood Towne Center.

A few days earlier, Meijer Inc. had vowed to give away seven generic antibiotics, leading some to wonder whether mid-Michigan was experiencing a prescription price war.

The benefits are obvious: low prices. But there is a catch, experts say.

Price shopping will require patients to play a more active role in protecting themselves against harmful drug interactions.

A patient's pharmacist takes on that role, but if prescriptions are purchased from more than one pharmacy, experts say, a druggist won't know when a patient is taking a potentially deadly cocktail of medications.

"Stay with one pharmacist," recommended Kristina Lunner, acting vice president for policy and communications for the American Pharmacists Association in Washington, D.C.

### On the Web

- Food and Drug Administration Electronic Orange Book: This online tool allows you to look up generic drugs by typing in the brand name or the active ingredient, [www.fda.gov/cder/ogd/#Available](http://www.fda.gov/cder/ogd/#Available). The site also will let you know in what dosage form and strength the generic is available.
- Wal-Mart's list of generic drugs: The list of drugs may change, so check back periodically to make sure yours is still offered or to find out if a previously unavailable prescription is added to the list: [www.walmart.com/pharmacy](http://www.walmart.com/pharmacy).
- Meijer pharmacy list: Meijer is offering some antibiotics for free. Here's where to find the list: [www.meijer.com/pharmacy/antibiotics.asp](http://www.meijer.com/pharmacy/antibiotics.asp).

### Related news from the Web

Latest headlines by topic:

- [Glucotrol, Glipizide \(generic\)](#)
- [Amoxicillin \(generic\), Amoxil, Trimox](#)
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That might be difficult for bargain hunters drawn to Wal-Mart for a \$4 dose of the heart medication lisinopril and then to Meijer for the free antibiotic amoxicillin.

That patient would need to recite for each pharmacist every drug and dosage that he or she is taking. Relaying that information could be more complicated were a loved one to pick up a prescription.

Will that spouse be able to list for the Meijer pharmacist all the medications a husband or wife purchased at Wal-Mart, Walgreens and Rite Aid?

"Pharmacists are in the best position to track a patient's medication profile," Lunner said.

Wal-Mart, which is based in Bentonville, Ark., rolled out its program in Florida three weeks ago. Last week it added 14 states. On Thursday it added 11, including Michigan.

"They got so much traffic, they got so much positive response from customers, it made sense to do it right away," local Wal-Mart spokesman Nicholas Infante said.

The company's list of \$4 drugs covers a broad range of medications, including the heart drug atenolol, the cholesterol drug lovastatin and the antipsychotic lithium carbonate.

The Wal-Mart expansion follows the industry trend toward offering generic medicines at lower prices.

Meijer offered its discount plan at 176 of its pharmacies last week. In May, Kmart Corp. began offering 184 generic prescriptions for \$15 for a 90-day supply.

Walgreens Co. and Rite Aid Corp. will not be trotting out competing low-cost plans. Both companies said about 95 percent of their clients have prescription insurance and already pay less than Wal-Mart's \$4 price.

But Wal-Mart customer Henry McMillan, 36, of Lansing figures he'll return to the store to avoid the \$10 co-pay he normally pays for the anti-inflammatory drug naproxen.

"I probably will," he said. "That's a pretty good deal."

Contact Christine Rook at 377-1261 or [clrook@lsj.com](mailto:clrook@lsj.com). The Associated Press contributed to this report.

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## KALAMAZOO GAZETTE

### Candidates address homelessness issue

Friday, October 27, 2006

**By Cedric Ricks**

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To help Kalamazoo County's homeless, candidates vying for seats on the Board of Commissioners suggested increasing job and educational opportunities and helping area nonprofits provide more support.

Those views and others were expressed Thursday at a candidates' forum held at the Comstock Community Center and sponsored by the League of Women Voters of the Kalamazoo Area. Candidates in attendance were Republican Commissioner Joe VanBruggen and three Democrats, Leroy James Crabtree, Thomas Post and Jerry Rudolph.

Post wants to represent District 16, which includes Climax, Pavilion and Wakeshma townships, along with part of Comstock Township and the northeastern corner of Portage. That district is currently served by Commissioner Jeff Balkema, who was absent.

Rudolph wants to represent District 17, which includes Brady, Prairie Ronde and Schoolcraft townships. The district is now served by Commissioner David Maturen, who was absent. Crabtree is challenging Van Bruggen in District 15, which covers Comstock Township north of the Interstate 94 Business Loop and Galesburg.

Candidates were asked several questions during the forum. Here are their responses to two questions:

Question: As a county commissioner what would you do to reduce homelessness in Kalamazoo County?

Rudolph: Jobs. I think homelessness often is derived strictly from an inability to get a job. ... We must provide jobs and more than a living wage to the homeless.

Post: I've been a contributor to the Gospel Mission for several years and strongly believe in their programs. ... You know that's where you need to go for help, an institution like that where they have a successful track record of helping people.

Crabtree: Much of the problem with homelessness is created by a lack of opportunities, both educational and employment. ... The housing investment bill that is being considered by the housing action network, I believe it is, could be a tremendous resource.

VanBruggen: The housing trust fund, as I mentioned earlier, is something that sometime in the future we are going to have to find funding for. ... There are things that are taking place right now as I said earlier that will probably impact the county budget and will preclude funding for the housing trust fund.

Question: U.S. citizens are frequently fed the message by political and other community leaders that taxes are too high and that government is bad. Do you believe that taxes are too high? Are they adequate to perform the needed services? Are they too low? How will you address that perception with the voters?

Post: When the federal government cuts taxes they just pawn off a lot of programs on the state and the state does the same thing. The state cuts a bunch of taxes and they force funding for those programs on local government. That's why we are having a transportation millage. We are going to have to pay our own way on that.

Rudolph: Nobody likes taxes. However, in selling the fact that we do need taxes means we have to look at the services that we do need to get by day to day. ... The main thing we have to do as county commissioners is to make sure (the public's) tax dollars are spent properly, spent in the right direction.

Show them these tax dollars are an investment in their future.

Crabtree: Taxes are certainly a burden on people, but as a civil society I believe we have an obligation to provide the services where the people need them most. I personally supported the senior services millage. I supported the juvenile home ... I don't necessarily believe that the taxes we pay are too high. I am sometimes frustrated with what the government spends the money on. It seems to be a misappropriation of priorities.

VanBruggen: I think there is a need for taxes. I think that as you pay taxes you provide services. There are some folks out there that seem to think that we can provide services without raising funds. The case and point is the elimination of the Single Business Tax ... with no action taken so far as to the replacement of that tax.

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Ann Arbor News

LETTERS

Friday, October 27, 2006

## **Foot care program begun for homeless**

In honor of the life of recently deceased Professor "Boat-Rocker" Scott Street - dear friend, teacher and long-time client - I would like to let people know of a new foot care program for the homeless at the Southeastern Association of Washtenaw County I have organized in his name. He and his wife Micky have made an indelible ink mark on my being as a social justice activist. Donations to this may be sent to SAWC - a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization - at 312 W. Huron St., Ann Arbor, MI 48103. Diabetic socks are especially needed.

Roberta "Robbi" A. Duda, Ann Arbor

Michigan Report

October 26, 2006

## **JOBLESS RATES STEADY ACROSS STATE**

The state's various metropolitan areas saw little change in their unemployment rates from August to September, but all are experiencing higher unemployment than they had a year ago, the Department of Labor and Economic Growth announced Thursday.

The report, noting that September marks the end of the tourist season, said total employment dropped in 10 regions from levels in August and dropped in 11 regions from year-ago levels.

"Jobless rates were very steady throughout Michigan's various areas in September," said Rick Waclawek, director of the Bureau of Labor Market Information & Strategic Initiatives. "Underlying this stability were offsetting forces. Students leave summer jobs in September to return to school, and jobs decline in tourism-related industries. This is offset in September with job gains at local and state schools and universities."

As has become tradition, the lowest employment was in the Ann Arbor region at 4.6 percent. That rate held steady from August, but was above the 3.9 percent in September 2005.

The highest unemployment, 8.1 percent, was in the Flint region. That marked a drop from the 8.3 percent in August, but was up from 6.8 percent in September 2005.

Northwest Lower Michigan saw the greatest monthly increase in unemployment, up .3 percentage point to 6.1 percent. Five areas, Flint, Holland-Grand Haven (5.2 percent), Jackson (7.3 percent), Niles-Benton Harbor (6.8 percent), and the Upper Peninsula (5.8 percent), tied for the greatest monthly drop at .2 percentage point.

Jackson had the largest increase for the year, up 1.4 percentage points to 7.3 percent. Detroit-Warren-Livonia, at 7 percent, and Lansing, at 5.7 percent, had the smallest annual growth at .3 percentage point.

Lansing also gained the largest portion of jobs for the month, with employment growing 2.3 percent to 238,500. Northwest Lower Michigan lost the greatest portion, with employment dropping 3.9 percent to 153,300.

For the year, Jackson lost the greatest proportion of jobs, down 1.9 percent to 73,600, while Grand Rapids and the Upper Peninsula gained the largest portion, up .8 percent to 390,100 and 155,600 respectively.

## Increase energy efficiency at home

Now is the time to Be WinterWise and increase the energy efficiency at home, advises the Michigan Public Service Commission.

The Michigan Public Service Commission has issued conservation tips, as well as information on financial assistance programs available for low-income customers.

"While natural gas bills this heating season are expected to be about \$20 less per month than last winter, it is still wise to make energy efficient improvements now — before the cold temperatures take hold," Michigan Public Service Commission Chairman J. Peter Lark said in a statement.

Easy energy saving tips include:

- Clean or replacing furnace filters regularly, according to the manufacturer's recommendations.
- Lower the thermostat on your water heater. A setting of 120 degrees is comfortable for most uses.
- Add insulation to attics and walls, if needed.
- Install a programmable thermostat that automatically dials down the temperature at night and when no one is home.
- Insulate gas or oil hot-water storage tank and pipes, being careful not to cover the thermostat.
- Set your thermostat as low as is comfortable in the winter and as high as is comfortable in the summer.
- Clean warm-air registers, baseboard heaters, and radiators as needed; make sure they're not blocked by furniture, carpeting, or drapes.
- Bleed trapped air from hot-water radiators once or twice a season; if in doubt about how to perform this task, call a professional.
- Place heat-resistant radiator reflectors between exterior walls and the radiators.
- Turn off kitchen, bath, and other exhaust fans within 20 minutes after you are done cooking or bathing; when replacing exhaust fans, consider installing high-efficiency, low-noise models.
- During the heating season, keep the draperies and shades on your southfacing windows open during the day to allow the sunlight to enter your home and closed at night to reduce the chill you may feel from cold windows.

To save even more money, the Michigan Public Service Commission reports that federal tax credits for certain energy efficient improvements are available for improvements made in 2006 and 2007.

Tax credits vary depending on the type of improvement, but can be substantial, officials said.

For low-income customers, the Michigan Public Service Commission also announced \$45 million in grants for low-income energy assistance.

Another \$15 million in grants will soon be awarded for low-income energy efficiency.

Additional help for low-income customers will come from a new, voluntary agreement with Michigan natural gas and electric utilities designed to protect more people from winter shut-offs.

Customers should contact their local utilities for more information.

Other financial assistance programs are:

- Utility budget payment plans, available to any residential customer.

- The Michigan Home Heating Credit form (MI-1040CR-7), with instructions from the Michigan Department of Treasury, will be sent to those who filed a Home Heating Credit in 2006. If you do not receive a home heating credit booklet, they are available on-line at **[www.michigan.gov/treasury](http://www.michigan.gov/treasury)**.

Forms will also be available by the end of January wherever tax forms are located.

After February, forms will be available by calling 1-800-367-6263. Forms must be filed by Sept. 30, 2007.

- Local Michigan Department of Human Services offices administer the State Emergency Relief Program.

- The Internal Revenue Service offers an Earned Income Credit on federal tax forms.

- The Michigan Public Service Commission's Be WinterWise campaign is designed to make people aware of higher natural gas prices, to provide information on what people can do now to lower their bills, and to provide information on the variety of financial assistance programs available to low-income utility customers.

For more information, call the MPSC at 1-800-292-9555.

The MPSC is an agency within the Department of Labor & Economic Growth.



## THE ANN ARBOR NEWS

### '2-1-1' means 'social services' Assistance line will operate around the clock beginning Nov. 1

Friday, October 27, 2006

#### News Staff Reporter

Beginning at 7 a.m. Wednesday, Nov. 1, you can dial the numbers 2-1-1 on your telephone to get phone help reaching every county social service agency and more.

The special assistance line will operate around the clock, and it's part of a nationwide effort to create a universal services referral system. The Federal Communications Commission reserved 2-1-1 as a universal, social-service access number for the nation, just as it designated 9-1-1 for emergencies.

"With 2-1-1, it will be so much easier for people to connect to the services they need," says Donna Gehringer, allocations and assessments director for the Livingston County United Way. "It will help human service providers better figure out what people in the community need."

"We will be counting calls to determine the needs of the community and then turn it around to report gaps and deficits," says Nancy Rosso, executive director of the LCUW. "Callers will be able to find everything - nursing homes, counseling, day care, and substance abuse help, any nonemergency human services."

Volunteers will operate the service 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The call center will provide nonemergency health and human referrals and information to Livingston, Washtenaw and Monroe county residents. It will be located at the Huron Valley Ambulance Department in Washtenaw County, and is free to all callers. Money donated to the United Way will pay for the operations 2-1-1.

"Livingston County couldn't do it alone without Washtenaw and Monroe counties," Rosso says. "The service cuts across all socio-economic levels. Anyone can access 2-1-1."

Rosso says there also is a Web component for people wishing to get information online. They will be able to go to [www.uw211southcentral.mi.org](http://www.uw211southcentral.mi.org).

Livingston County began its social services clearinghouse line, which was known as LC Help Now!, in April 2004. The purpose was to give people one point of reference, which is especially helpful for clients who are in some kind of crisis. With one phone call, a caller can be hooked up with food, shelter, clothing and prescription medication as well as getting access to public health, support groups, and other county services.

"You can also get connected to a crisis helpline for things like domestic violence," says Gehringer.

People can also use 2-1-1 to find a place to volunteer.

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